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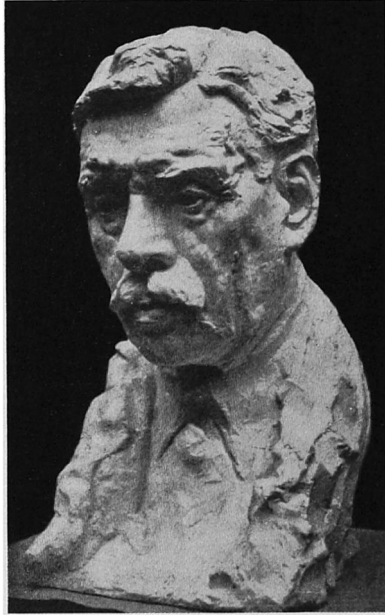
## OPEN LETTER ON THE ART TARIFF QUESTION

Strong expressions of opinion in favor of the removal of the duty on works of art have appeared simultaneously in many parts of the country. This fact is only one of the many evidences that we are entering upon a new phase in our national existence. Our success in business is unprecedented; our material progress among the nations of the world is unrivaled, but in one of the most important attainments—the development of the fine arts—we are still very far behind.

This deficiency in our national achievements is due largely to the natural difficulties under which we have labored. The youngest of the great nations, we have been forced to devote our energies to developing the resources of the country. The result has been the accumulation of vast wealth, and this having been accomplished, we are now beginning to realize our responsibilities on what might be called the finer side of life, the duty to increase the facilities for education and for the cultivation of a finer public taste and a keener appreciation of objects of beauty.

But as we turn to our new task, we are confronted with two obstacles. First, the fact that, unlike the nations of the Old World, we have inherited no art treasures from the great epochs of the past; and, second, that the law has penalized and discouraged the transfer of these art treasures to this country by imposing a duty upon them. The first obstacle is a natural one, which was absolutely unavoidable, but the second is an artificial barrier, which can be swept away by the stroke of a pen.

Is it not the paramount duty, then, of every Senator, Congressman, and citizen of the country to do everything in his power to remove this barrier from the path of progress? and have we not a right to expect that works



BUST OF FALGUIERE  
By A. Rodin  
(Casting of portraiture)



TRUTH  
By Daniel Chester French  
(Draped ideal figure)

of art will be placed upon the free list during the next session of Congress? The half-way measures which have been passed recognize and accept the principle for the complete application of which we are contending.

If this is true, as admitted, then the more we have of them in the country, the better. Their introduction should be encouraged in every possible way. It is not enough to remove the duty only from those which are to be permanently in public galleries; for, as the late Senator Hoar well said: "Private ownership is always very brief, and sooner or later the paintings get into public galleries." At the present time more than



DECORATIVE PANEL  
By Ernst Barlach  
(Relief high and low)

a third of the paintings on public exhibition in the Corcoran Gallery, Washington, D. C., with a valuation of more than one-half, are owned by private individuals. These paintings have paid the penalty.

American artists are unanimous in their demand for the removal of the duty. The only protection they wish is that which would come from its abolition; for, as a prominent artist has said, "Our livelihood depends upon the education of the public taste." As a source of revenue, the returns are insignificant as compared with the educational benefit which would be derived from the removal of the duty.

The objects of this league are to bring together into one strong, active movement the many factors and influences which are working for the abolition of this duty, to effectively organize public opinion throughout the entire country, and to present a bill at the next session of Congress. We believe that a thorough consideration of the subject will result in the legislation which we desire.

EDWARD R. WARREN

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